

REMARKS

Claims 1-72 are pending in the Application. Claims 1-72 are rejected. Claims 1-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph. Claims 1-24 are also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Claims 1-5, 11-19 and 21-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Hsu (U.S. Pat. No. 5,868,202). Claims 1-72 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims of U.S. Pat. Nos. 6,425,448; 6,732,792; 6,679,322; 6,598,686; and 6,561,288. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the Application in view of the remarks and amendments herein.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Specifically, it is indicated that these claims call for "a drainage well bore pattern comprising one or more lateral well bores;" however, it is argued that the specification fails to disclose any pattern with one lateral well bore. Claims 1-24 are also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention. Specifically these claims call for "a drainage well bore pattern comprising one or more lateral well bores;" however, it is argued that it is not clear how one well bore can be a pattern.

Independent claim 1 has been amended to recite "a plurality of lateral well bores." Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 and its dependent claims 2-24, as amended, are definite and comply with the written description requirement. Therefore, Applicant requests withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1-24 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first and second paragraphs.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-5, 11-19 and 21-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Hsu (U.S. Pat. No. 5,868,202). Claim 1, as amended, is drawn to a system for surface production of gas from a subterranean zone including a first and second well bores coupled to each other at a junction and "a plurality of lateral well bores coupled to the junction." Hsu fails

to disclose a plurality of lateral well bores coupled to the junction. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1-5, 11-19 and 21-23 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

Double Patenting

Claims 1-72 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims of U.S. Pat. Nos. 6,425,448; 6,732,792; 6,679,322; 6,598,686; and 6,561,288. While Applicant disagrees that all of the claims of the present application are not patentably distinct from the claims of the above-mentioned patents, for example claim 49 and others, in the interests of expediting prosecution, Applicant has provided a terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR § 1.321(c). Applicant reserves the right to traverse this rejection at any time in the future. In view of the terminal disclaimer, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-72 under obviousness-type double patenting.

Conclusion

In view of the above, and for other reasons clearly apparent, Applicant respectfully submits that the Application is in condition for allowance, and request such a Notice. If the present Application is not allowed and/or if one or more of the rejections is maintained or made final, Applicant hereby requests a telephone conference with the Examiner and further requests that the Examiner contact the undersigned attorney to schedule a telephone conference

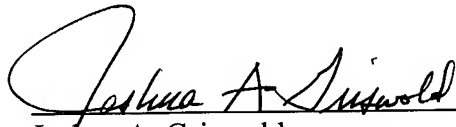
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A check for \$110 for terminal disclaimer fee is included herewith. Please apply any other charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 9/21/04


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